

VZCZCXRO6958
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DE RUEHAH #0556 1211248
ZNY CCCCC ZZHZDF
O 011248Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2749
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 5144
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2888
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2753
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3388
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFISS/CDR USTRANSCOM SCOTT AFB IL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3513

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASHGABAT 000556

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/01/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: MFA NOT ABLE TO MAKE OVERFLIGHT
BILL DISAPPEAR

REF: ASHGABAT 550

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Sylvia Reed Curran for reasons 1
.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) During a meeting with Charge on April 29 regarding recent denial of overflight to U.S. VIP planes, Deputy Foreign Minister Wepa Hajiyeve encouraged the Embassy to follow up with MFA's America's Department following a meeting between DATT and Turkmen State Civil Aviation (THY) officials, scheduled for April 30 (reftel). This was wise counsel. During the meeting with America's Department, Department Head said that MFA cannot simply sign a note stating that the United States does not owe the overflight bill and dismiss the charges. He underscored that THY is under a different Deputy Chairman, Nazarguly Shagulyev. As influential as Deputy Chairman and Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov may be, he cannot simply write a note that overrides the other Deputy Chairman. Therefore, despite whatever impression may have been left from the meeting with THY, the overflight bill is not completely resolved.

¶2. (C) Bashimov said that he understood that the United States cannot pay overflight fees. Nevertheless, he encouraged us to be flexible and be prepared to discuss with THY various options for "payment." This is the same advise DFM Hajiyeve gave prior to the meeting with THY.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: With THY looking to MFA to write off the bill, and MFA looking for THY to receive some sort of other &payment,8 it is difficult to know what should be offered to whom to actually make the current bill, and threatened bills for 2001-2006, and potential future bills go away. Nevertheless, Bashimov (protect) has always been a good interpreter of what goes on behind the curtain of Turkmen bureaucracy. Plan A had been to discuss with THY a variety of equipment and other items that could be "donated" in order to deal with the overflight bill. It looks like perhaps we should return to Plan A. END COMMENT.
MILES